

Message Text

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ACTION SS-25

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 ASUNCION 2650

EXDIS

FOR DEPUTY SECRETARY CHRISTOPHER: ARA ASSISTANT SECRETARY
TODMAN: D/HA MR. SCHNEIDER

DEPT PLEASE PASS NSC MR. PASTOR

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1
TAGS: SHUM, OAS, PA
SUBJ: PARAGUAY-IAHRC VISIT AND IDB LOANS

SUMMARY: AFTER MEETING WITH PRESIDENT STROESSNER JUNE 28
AND THREE MEETINGS WITH FOREIGN MINISTER NOGUES, GOP STILL
UNDECIDED WHETHER TO PERMIT IAHRC VISIT TO PARAGUAY. PRESI-
DENT PROMISED FINAL DECISION LATER THIS WEEK. HE UNDER-
STANDS CLEARLY THAT UNLESS PERMISSION FOR VISIT GRANTED
PRIOR TO JULY 6, IT WILL BE NECESSARY FOR GOP TO WITHDRAW
PENDING IDB FSO LOAN AS USG PREPARED TO CAST NEGATIVE VOTE
UNTIL SUCH TIME AS IAHRC VISIT APPROVED. BOTH PRESIDENT
AND FONMIN REFERRED REPEATEDLY TO STRONG PRESSURES FROM
URUGUAY AND BRAZIL AS SOLE REASON THAT APPROVAL HAD NOT
BEEN FORTHCOMING. FOREIGN MINISTER NOGUES BELIEVES THAT
PRESIDENT WILL IN THE END PERMIT VISIT. PRESIDENT WAS
FRIENDLY BUT CLEARLY UNHAPPY TO MAKE HARD DECISION
WHETHER TO OFFEND IDEOLOGICALLY ALIGNED NEIGHBORS OR

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DOUGH DISPENSING USG. END SUMMARY.

1. ON MY RETURN FROM WASHINGTON I MET WITH FOREIGN
MINISTER NOGUES AT HIS HOME ON SUNDAY, JUNE 26. AS HE
HAD JUST RETURNED FROM GRANADA, HE WAS SCHEDULED TO
REPORT ON THE OASGA TO THE PRESIDENT THE FOLLOWING DAY.
HIS VERSION OF THE VANCE BILATERAL WAS IN ACCORDANCE

WITH OUR OWN RECORD OF CONVERSATION AND HE SAID THAT BASED ON THE VANCE MEETING HE WOULD RECOMMEND TO THE PRESIDENT THAT THE IAHRC VISIT BE ALLOWED. I TOLD HIM THAT I HAD INSTRUCTIONS TO REQUEST AN APPOINTMENT WITH THE PRESIDENT TO WARN HIM OF THE POSSIBLE COSEQUENCES OF FURTHER DELAY ON UPCOMING IDB FSO LOANS WHICH WE WOULD NOT APPROVE. I STRESSED TO NOGUES THAT BOTH PRESIDENT STROESSNER'S AND PRESIDENT CARTER'S CREDIBILITY WERE INVOLVED BECAUSE PRESIDENTIAL ADVISOR PAPPALARDO HAD CONFIRMED TELEPHONICALLY TO THE DEPARTMENT EARLY IN MAY THAT VISIT WOULD BE PERMITTED AFTER MAY 15 AND THAT THEREFORE USG SHOULD VOTE FOR THEN PENDING IBRD LOANS - WHICH IN FACT USG DID. PRESIDENT CARTER HAD CONGRATULATED AMBASSADOR LOPES ESCOBAR ON GOP DECISION AND HAD INFORMED SEVERAL U.S. CONGRESSMEN OF GOP'S WILLINGNESS TO ALLOW IAHRC VISIT AS A DEMONSTRATION THAT QUIET DIPLOMACY WAS PREFERABLE TO CONGRESSIONAL SANCTIONS. NOGUES SAID THAT IT MIGHT NOT BE NECESSARY FOR ME TO MAKE CALL ON PRESIDENT BECAUSE HE HOPED THAT HE COULD OBTAIN HIS APPROVAL FOR IAHRC VISIT. OTHERWISE HE WOULD ADVISE ME SOMETIME MONDAY TO ASK FOR APPOINTMENT.

2. NOGUES CALLED ME MONDAY AND SAID THAT PRESIDENT WAS STILL UNDECIDED AND SO I REQUESTED APPOINTMENT FOR JUNE 28. IN A PRE-MEETING WITH NOGUES, HE SAID THAT PRESIDENT DID NOT WANT TO WEAKEN ANTI-ECOMMUNIST STANCE
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OF BRAZIL AND URUGUAY AND THAT THESE COUNTRIES HAD BEGGED HIM NOT TO BREAK SOLIDARITY. MOREOVER, SOMEONE (NOGUES DID NOT KNOW WHO) HAD GIVEN STROESSNER THE IDEA THAT IAHRC WAS COMMUNIST-RIDDLED.

3. WHEN MEETING WITH STROESSNER I STRESSED THE ACROSS-THE-BOARD INTEREST OF USG IN HUMAN RIGHTS AND THAT PRESIDENT CARTER'S TOUGH STAND AGAINST HR VIOLATION IN USSR AND EASTERN EUROPE SHOULD CERTAINLY DISPEL ANY IDEAS THAT THE USG WAS SOFT ON COMMUNISM. AFTER RELATED THE STORY OF PAPPALARDO'S EARLIER CALL TO DEPARTMENT PROMISING ACCEPTANCE OF IAHRC IN MAY AND HOW THIS INFORMATION WAS USED BY PRESIDENT CARTER, STROESSNER ASKED ME WHI WE INSISTED SO MCUH THAT PARAGUAY RECEIVE THE VISIT. I EXPLAINED TO HIM THAT PARAGUAY HAD MADE LANDAU

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 ASUNCION 2650

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PROGRESS DURING LAST YEAR ON HR ISSUES. MOREOVER,
THE REPORT ON PARAGUAY PREPARED BY IAHRC WAS BASED
SOLELY ON DENUNCIATIONS FROM ABROAD AND COULD PROBABLY
BE IMPROVED IF THE IAHRC HAD ACCESS TO COUNTRY. ALSO,
IT WOULD GIVE GOP OFFICIALS CHANCE TO TALK TO IAHRC
MEMBERS. PARAGUAY, UNLIKE ITS NEIGHBORS, HAD NEVER
BEEN SANCTIONED BY CONGRESS AND IF THE IAHRC VISIT
WOULD LEAD TO AN IMPORVEMENT OF HR SITUATION WITHOUT
PUNISHMENTS, URUGUAY AND ARGENTINA COULD TAKE HEART AND
USE THE SAME ROUTE TO GET OUT OF THEIR PRESENT ADVERSARY
POSITION. PRESIDENT SAID THAT URUGUAYANS AND PRESIDENT
GEISEL WOULD CONSIDER IT AS A BETRAYAL IF GOP PERMITTED
VISIT AND THAT IT WAS IMPORTANT THAT ALL ANTI-COMMUNIST
COUNTRIES STAND FIRM. HE SAID THAT GEISEL AND THE
URUGUAYANS HAD TALKED TO HIM REPEATEDLY ABOUT THIS
MATTER. AT THIS POINT I TOLD HIM THAT SECTION 502B
OF THE FOREIGN ASSISTANCE ACT WOULD BE APPLICABLE TO
PARAGUAY FOR REFUSING TO ADMIT AN INTERNATIONAL ORGANI-
ZATION. WE HOPED IT WOULD NOT HAVE TO BE APPLIED AND
THAT THEREFORE UNTIL HE DECIDED WHAT TO DO, IT WOULD BE
ADVISABLE TO WITHDRAW LOANS WHICH WERE IBD SOFT LOANS.
THESE WOULD BE KILLED UNLESS WE APPROVED THEM. I
SAID THAT I REALLY DID NOT UNDERSTAND HIS HESITATION

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SINCE GOP WAS CO-FOUNDER OF IAHRC AND THAT GROUP WOULD
NOT COME TO PUNISH PARAGUAY BUT TO FIND A WAY TO IM-
PROVE HUMAN RIGHTS. I SUGGESTED THAT THE PRESIDENT
SEND AN EMISSARY TO AGUILAR TO ASSURE HIMSELF THAT
IAHRC MEMBERS WERE IMPARTIAL AND DECENT. THE PRESI-

DENT INDICATED AGAIN HIS UNSWERVING SUPPORT OF PRESIDENT GEISEL AND THE URUGUAYAN FIGHT AGAINST COMMUNISM, BUT SAID THAT EITHER HE OR NOGUES WOULD REMAIN IN TOUCH WITH ME. HE ADDED THAT HE UNDERSTOOD BUT DID NOT LIKE TO BE PRESSURED ABOUT UPCOMING DEADLINE OF THE IBD LOANS.

4. AS I LEFT HE SUMMONED FOREIGN MINISTER NOGUES TO HIS OFFICE. AN HOUR LATER NOGUES ASKED ME TO SEE HIM IN THE FOREIGN OFFICE. HE SAID THE PRESIDENT GAVE HIM AN ACCURATE REPORT OF OUR CONVERSATION AND THAT HE WAS NOW WEIGHING WHETHER TO YIELD TO U.S. OR URUGUAYAN-BRAZILIAN PRESSURE. NOGUES SAID THE PRESIDENT SEEMED TO BE LEANING TO THE U.S. POSITION AND THAT HE AND PAPPALARDO WOULD CONTINUE TO DO THEIR BEST AND THAT THE PRESIDENT HAD ASKED HIM TO KEEP IN CLOSE TOUCH WITH ME. NOGUES MADE A NOTE OF THE PENDING IBD LOANS AND DATES WHEN THEY WOULD BE DISCUSSED. HE ALSO SAID THE PRESIDENT MENTIONED THE POSSIBILITY OF NOGUES' VISITING AGUILAR TO ASSURE THAT A FAIR GROUP WOULD COME IF VISIT WERE TO BE ALLOWED.

5. I WILL MEET WITH PAPPALARDO TONIGHT. STROESSNER TOLD ME THAT THE QUESTION OF THE IAHRC VISIT HAS PRE-OCCUPIED HIM GREATLY AND TAKEN UP MUCH OF HIS TIME. I PREDICT THAT WE SHALL HAVE TO SLUG IT OUT FOR A FEW MORE DAYS. OUR ONLY TOOL AGAINST BRAZILIAN/URUGUAYAN PRESSURE REMAINS OUR THREAT TO VETO PARAGUAY'S REQUESTS FOR SOFT IBD LOANS WHICH WOULD NOT ONLY KILL THESE

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(\$8 PLUS MILLION) BUT SET A BAD PRECEDENT FOR CONTINUED U.S. ASSISTANCE. MOREOVER, ANY U.S. PUNITIVE ACTION WOULD MOVE PARAGUAY TO THE ARGENTINA, CHILE, URUGUAY GROUP OF HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATORS WHO HAVE BEEN PUNISHED AND THIS THE GOP WANTS TO AVOID AT ALL COST.

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